

ecoNews — Wire —

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

September 16, 2004

For immediate release

- 1. EPC to address animal feeding operation rules**
- 2. Iowa awarded \$250,000 EPA grant for clean school buses**
- 3. Conservation Reserve Program general sign up ends Sept. 24**

EPC TO ADDRESS ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATION RULES

DES MOINES – Bringing Iowa rules for animal feeding operations into compliance with federal regulations will be on the agenda for the Environmental Protection Commission's Sept. 20 meeting.

The EPC will be asked to approve a proposal that would primarily affect large or concentrated animal feeding operations by requiring federal national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) permits.

"It's important for livestock producers to know that if this proposal is approved, it will be at least two years before the larger confinements will have to act," said Gene Tinker, coordinator for DNR's animal feeding operations.

The EPC will meet on Monday, at 10 a.m., at the DNR office, 7900 Hickman Road in Urbandale. Public participation is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. The meeting is open to the public.

The complete agenda follows:

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Director's Remarks
- Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund – 2005 Intended Use Plan

- Notice of Intended Action - Amendments to Chapters 60, 63, 64 and 65 – CAFO Regulations.
- Notice of Intended Action - Amendments to Chapter 65 – Definitions, Construction Permit Requirements, Master Matrix and Groundwater Determination
- 2004 Environmental Monitoring and Laboratory Services Agreement with the University of Iowa – Water Quality
- Presentation – Process Improvement Activities in the Department
- Contract with TBM Consulting Group for Kaizen Process Improvement Event
- Decision - Contract for geologic drilling with Aquadrill, Inc.
- Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request
- Proposed Contested Case Decision – Miles McDougall
- Proposed Contested Case Decision – Jeff Salsbury
- Referrals to the Attorney General
 - a) Marsha Leigh and the Universal Assembly of Christians Church, Inc. (Glenwood – Mills County) – solid waste and air quality
 - b) Cash Brewer (Cherokee – Cherokee County) – animal feeding operation and solid waste
 - c) Holstein Dairy (Holstein – Ida County) – animal feeding operation
 - d) Emer Carlson (Fairfield – Jefferson County) – air quality
 - e) Wilber McNear d/b/a McNear Oil Company (Onawa – Monona County) – underground storage tanks
- Monthly Reports
- General Discussion
- Items for next month's meeting

More information about the agenda items can be found on the DNR website under Commissions and Boards at www.iowadnr.com.

The members of the commission are Darrell Hanson, chair, Manchester; Kathryn Murphy, LeMars; Terrance Townsend, Newton; Lisa Davis-Cook, West Des Moines; Lori Glanzman, Mt. Pleasant; Jerry Peckum, Jefferson; Heidi Vittetoe, Washington; Francis Thicke, Fairfield; and Donna Buell, Spirit Lake. The director of the DNR is Jeff Vonk.

For more information, contact Karen Grimes, at (515) 281-5135.

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IOWA AWARDED \$250,000 EPA GRANT FOR CLEAN SCHOOL BUSES

DES MOINES—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded \$250,000 in grant funds to help install pollution control devices on older school buses in Iowa and fund higher blend soydiesel usage for bus fleets, state and private officials announced today.

The competitive grant was awarded to just 20 recipients across the nation to help reduce childhood exposure to diesel exhaust.

The grant was provided to BEEP, the Bus Emission Education Project, which is a partnership of the School Administrators of Iowa, the Iowa Association of School Boards, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Education and the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association.

About 230 school buses between model years 1990-94 will be retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalysts, devices that use reactive metals to break down pollutants into less harmful substances. Catalysts cut harmful soot output by at least 20 percent, smog forming hydrocarbons by half and carbon monoxide by 40 percent. Newer buses are already equipped with these emissions controls.

“The catalyst is housed in a muffler, so this is an opportunity to not only reduce emissions, but replace older, worn mufflers at no cost,” said Brian Button, air information specialist with the DNR.

The grant will also help fund Iowa produced soydiesel, with nearly 4,000 gallons of pure soy oil provided by West Central Cooperative in Ralston, which is providing the soy oil at half price. The grant is covering the remainder cost to provide the soy oil free to schools. The soy oil will be blended to B10 or B20 fuel, a mix of 10 to 20 percent soy oil and 80 to 90 percent diesel to yield nearly 34,000 gallons of biodiesel.

Soydiesel blends cut soot output by 15 percent, hydrocarbons by 10 percent, sulfur by 20 percent and carbon monoxide by 10 percent.

“This demonstration grant will allow us to analyze new emission reduction technology, while encouraging the use of Iowa-grown soy oil blended with diesel fuel which is not only environmentally cleaner, but renewable,” said Danny Thede, with the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association and transportation director of the Indianola Community Schools.

Both the soy fuel and oxidation catalysts will be provided free to participating school districts. The grant will also provide three rebates, of \$4,000 each, to help schools purchase newer engines. Schools have until the end of September to request the materials. Notice of the grant opportunity was sent to all school superintendents in

August. Fuel use could begin this fall and oxidation catalyst installation will start later this winter.

“This is a great project and we're pleased to partner with other organizations in this initiative to help protect the health of children, reduce air pollution, save schools money, and support Iowa farmers,” said Troyce Fisher, executive director of School Administrators of Iowa.

In April 2003, the U.S. EPA launched the Clean School Bus USA program to help reduce children's exposure to diesel exhaust. Particles in diesel exhaust can penetrate deep into the lungs and pose health risks including aggravated asthma symptoms and other health problems. Children are more susceptible to emissions than healthy adults, because their lungs are still developing and they have a faster breathing rate.

Children spend a great deal of time on or near idling buses not only while riding, but also while buses load and unload students as well.

“The health and safety of Iowa school children is important to our mission. We are pleased Iowans are being recognized for our school bus emissions reduction initiatives and appreciate this grant opportunity to further cut emissions,” said Terry Voy, who directs transportation programs for the Iowa Association of School Boards.

For more information, contact Brian Button at (515) 281-7832.

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CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM GENERAL SIGN UP ENDS SEPT. 24

DES MOINES — Landowners have until Sept. 24 to enroll land in the United States Department of Agriculture's general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign up. Offers must be made at their local Farm Service Agency office.

The DNR has biologists and foresters on staff who can help landowners match their goals with an offer that will be competitive. Landowners can call (515) 281-5918 to find the DNR biologist or forester for their county.

People who made unsuccessful offers in the last sign-up may find this service especially helpful, since DNR specialists can help them review their previous offer and include more diverse plantings and native grasses. Planting trees or offering only the most erosive part of a field may also make an offer more acceptable.

Since this is a small sign-up compared with previous years, this sign-up will be very competitive. Landowners compete against each other nationwide for about 2.3 million acres that can be enrolled.

Participants in the Conservation Reserve Program voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into contracts for 10 or 15 years. In exchange, they receive annual rental payments and assistance to offset the cost to establish conservation practices.

The CRP is the most successful conservation program in the country, improving water quality, reducing soil erosion and creating valuable wildlife habitat.

Cropland not currently enrolled in CRP may be offered during this enrollment. CRP participants with contracts expiring in September 2004 or September 2005 may also submit offers during this enrollment.

More information is available on the Iowa DNR's Web site at www.iowadnr.com.

For more information, contact Karen Grimes, Information Specialist, at (515) 281-5135.